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FOUR ECO-TERRORISTS INDICTED FOR 2001 ARSON ON FEDERAL LAND
KNOWN AS THE LITCHFIELD WILD HORSE & BURRO
CORRALS IN SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, FBI Special Agent in Charge Drew Parenti, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Special Agent in Charge Paul Vido announced today that a federal grand jury returned a three-count indictment charging JOSEPH DIBEE, age, 38, REBECCA RUBIN, age 32, DARREN THURSTON, age 36, and JUSTIN SOLONDZ, age 26, with conspiracy to commit arson, arson of a government building, and use of a destructive device during and in relation to a crime of violence. DIBEE, RUBIN and THURSTON have been charged by the United States Attorney's Office in Oregon, where THURSTON remains in custody. The other three defendants are fugitives.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the FBI, ATF, and the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

According to Assistant United States Attorney R. Steven Lapham, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that on September 1, 2001 through October 15, 2001, DIBEE, RUBIN, THURSTON, SOLONDZ, and others, conspired to commit arson and did in fact commit arson on federal government property known as the Litchfield Wild Horse and Burro Corrals located in Susanville, California, and owned by the Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The four defendants are also charged with carrying and using one or more incendiary bombs. One device ignited the hay barn which contained about 250 tons of hay, a second device was located in the hay barn adjacent to the one that burned. A third device was located on the front porch of the BLM office, and a fourth was under the car of a BLM horse wrangler. Only the first device ignited, burning the barn. No one was injured. The other three devices were recovered intact.

United States Attorney Scott stated, "Today's indictments of these four eco-terrorists bring to 11 the total number of ELF or ELF-ALF related defendants charged in three separate cases brought by this office over the past year. Those who would commit acts of terror, such as arson, in the name of the Earth Liberation Front, and the Animal Liberation Front should be on notice: federal law enforcement will do everything in its capacity to track you down and hold you

accountable for your dangerous behavior."

"We're pleased that ATF expertise in determining the cause and origin of fires was instrumental in this investigation. Our partnership in JTTF is a collaborative effort that has produced positive results," said Paul Vido, Special Agent in Charge, ATF, San Francisco Field Division.

"Although this incident occurred more than 4 years ago, the FBI and its JTTF partners continued to investigate these acts of extremism, and are pleased charges have been filed against those responsible," stated FBI Special Agent in Charge Drew Parenti.

If convicted, the penalties under federal law for conspiracy to commit arson and arson are 20 years maximum, a mandatory minimum of five years in prison, and a three-year term of supervised release. The penalty for use of a destructive device during a crime of violence is 30 years to be served consecutively to the underlying crime, and a five-year term of supervised release.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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